



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/407,475 | 09/28/1999 | WILLIAM J. MAYER | 99AB133 | 2818 |

7590 06/30/2003

JOHN J HORN ESQ
ALLEN BRADLEY COMPANY
PATENT DEPT 704P
P O BOX 2086 8TH FLOOR T29
MILWAUKEE, WI 532019814

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, DANNY

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2836

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/407,475

Applicant(s)

MAYER ET AL.

Examiner

Danny Nguyen

Art Unit

2836

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 May 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 18 and 22 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 19 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-17 and 21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's arguments filed on 05/01/2003 with respect to claims 1, 18, 19, and 22 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 19, 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kirilloff (USPN 3,895,264). Kirilloff discloses a safety switching apparatus comprises a control configuration (such as 35, 44) for selectively linking and de-linking the voltage lines (voltage lines 1, 2, 3) to and from the device (device 11); a controller (35) for controlling the control configuration, a ground configuration (such as 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16) for linking the input nodes to ground when the voltage lines are de-linked from the device (col. 4, lines 9-17).

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 18, 22 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Claims 18 and 22 recite a safety switching system comprises a switch for each access that is positioned proximate each access, each switch positionable in at least a first position wherein the switch causes the control configuration to link the voltage lines

to the plurality of stations and second configuration and an indicator for each access, each indicator indicating electrical isolation of a corresponding station, a grounding configuration for, when the voltage lines are de-linked from the plurality of stations, link the input nodes to ground, and a ground contactor including one normal open ground contact for each line and including a ground coil, each ground contact linking a separate one of intermediate nodes to ground, the ground coil is in series with the normal closed contact between the rails.

The references of record do not teach or suggest the aforementioned limitation, nor would it be obvious to modify those references to include such limitation.

4. Claims 2-17, 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 2 recites a safety switching system comprises an isolation contactor including one normally open (NO) isolation contact for each voltage line and including an isolation coil, each isolation contact linking an associated line to a separate intermediate node adjacent the device, the controller provision of current to the isolation coil.

Claim 21 recites a safety switching system comprises a ground conductor wherein the step of grounding includes the steps of monitoring the ground conductor to ensure that the conductor remains grounded, and if the ground conductor is ungrounded, indicating the ungrounded condition.

Art Unit: 2836

The references of record do not teach or suggest the aforementioned limitation, nor would it be obvious to modify those references to include such limitation.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Danny Nguyen whose telephone number is (703)-305-5988. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon to Fri 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

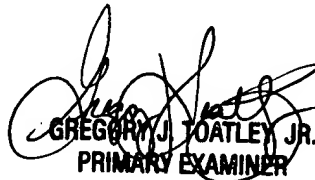
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Sircus can be reached on (703)-308-3119. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)-872-9318 for regular communications and (703)-872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)-308-0956.

DN

DN

June 19, 2003


GREGORY J. TOATLEY JR.
PRIMARY EXAMINER